Pradesh during 1998-99 to 2000-01 is given in Annex I. *(See* Appendix 193, Annexure No. 10).

There is no approved panel of consultants in National Highways Authority of India. The agencies are selected, as and when required through open competitive bidding for preparation of estimates for different works of the Authority.

Four Lanning National Highway-5

610. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to remove traffic congestion in all the National Highways;

(b) whether four lanning work has been initiated for the purpose;

(c) if so, whether such four lanning has started on NH-5;

(d if so, the specific four lanning work started on Khargpur and Chhatrapur portion on NH-5; and

(e) the progress thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has undertaken improvement works such as widening single lane sections to 2 lanes, four lanning existing 2 lane sections, construction of road over bridges, by-passes etc., depending upon traffic needs and availability of funds on various National Highways.

(c) to (e) Contracts for four-lanning of NH-5 from Chennai to Balasore including Chhatrapur and NH-60 between Balasore and Khargpur have been recently awarded and work has commenced under most of the contracts.

Cutting of old trees in West Bengal

611. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of 200 year old trees on Jessore Road linking Kolkata and Dhaka are being cut down in road widening operations;